

**Middle Georgia State University**  
**Office of Student Life**  
**Recognized Student Organization (RSO)**  
**Policies and Procedures Handbook**

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## **Mission Statement Office of Student Life**

The Office of Student Life supports the mission of Student Affairs and the University. Student life supports the retention, progression, and graduation of a diverse student body.

The Student Life Program:

- Offers diverse opportunities, activities and services which foster meaningful engagement outside the classroom. Students evolve by participating in social and cultural experiences that enhance their learning environment as they integrate the in-class and out-of-class experiences.
- Strives to promote an environment conducive to growth by offering programs that challenge and facilitate a student's overall sense of community thereby allowing students to realize their fullest potential.

### **Position Statement on the Operation of Recognized Student Organizations (RSOs)**

Middle Georgia State University recognizes the importance of co-curricular involvement in activities as a vital component of the University experience. The successful development and maintenance of a recognized student organization (RSO) is a primary element of student life. It is the position of the University that the free and open association of students through organizations with purposes and functions that are lawful and consistent with University objectives is necessary and desirable. The philosophical basis for student activities and organizations is to provide education in civic responsibility, leadership development, cooperation, independent thought and action, and participation in the rights and privileges afforded to all citizens.

### **Recognized Student Organizations (RSOs) Privileges and Responsibilities**

1. Every student organization wishing to operate at Middle Georgia State University must apply for and secure official recognition status. RSOs must complete the registration process annually in order to maintain recognized status. Officially recognized student organizations shall have the following privileges:
  - a. May use Middle Georgia State University's name to identify institutional affiliation.
  - b. May recruit members on campus.
  - c. May use University facilities and equipment for meetings and functions, subject to University and Board of Regents' policies and approval by the Office of Student Life.
  - d. Will have access to publicity on Middle Georgia State University campuses.
  - e. Will have equal access to the resources of the Office of Student Life.
  - f. Will be eligible to apply for COA funding subject to Board of Regents' policies, University regulations governing allocation of student activities fees, and availability of funds.

2. In order to obtain and maintain official recognition as an RSO, all Middle Georgia State University student organizations must:
  - a. Present evidence that all proposed activities will be in conformance with the stated purpose of the organization.
  - b. Present evidence that its purpose and activities are lawful and consistent with University objectives.
  - c. Present evidence that its membership is open to all eligible students, regardless of race, national origin, color, sex, age, religion, or disability.
  - d. Conduct its affairs in accordance with its constitution and University regulations.
  - e. Conduct its financial affairs in accordance with sound business procedures and appropriate University requirements.
  - f. Have a primary advisor who is a faculty or staff, and who has the approval of his/her Dean or supervisor. All RSOs must maintain an active advisor to maintain active status.
3. Recognition shall be granted only to those organizations whose purpose and proposed activities are clearly related to the educational goals and missions of the University and of the Office of Student Life. Recognition shall be denied or revoked if any evidence presented shows that the proposed organization will present substantial likelihood of material interference or conflict with the educational process of the University or any of the following:
  - a. The regular and orderly operation of the University.
  - b. The requirements of appropriate discipline within the University community.
  - c. The academic pursuits of teaching, learning and other campus activities.
  - d. The laws of public policies of the State of Georgia and the United States.
  - e. The statutes and regulations of the University and the policies of the Board of Regents.
  - f. The operation of an existing Recognized Student Organization.

## **RSO Officer/Student Leader Responsibilities and Expectations**

The Middle Georgia State University Office of Student Life supports the additional time and energy that students serving as officers and leaders dedicate to their organizations. The staff of the Office of Student Life recognizes the importance of learning opportunities outside of the typical classroom and commits to working closely with all RSO officers, leaders, members, and advisors to ensure that these students receive the benefits of serving in such important roles.

As with all Middle Georgia State University students, the primary expectations of all RSO officers/leaders are integrity and civility.

All RSO officers/leaders are expected to read, understand, and abide by the Middle Georgia State University [Student Code of Conduct](#), in addition to the policies and procedures outlined in this RSO Policies and Procedures Handbook.

All officers/leaders will be expected to work and communicate with the RSO advisor(s), as well as with the Office of Student Life, regarding all proposed events, activities and fundraisers. No event, activity or fundraiser will occur without the support and approval of both the RSO advisor(s) and the Office of Student Life.

All minutes of meetings should be accessible to anyone requesting access to said minutes.

The Office of Student Life reserves the right to request a meeting with the officers/student leaders and advisor(s) of the RSO sponsoring an event or activity, either before or after the event, to discuss how to improve future events, to discuss any problems that may have occurred during the course of the event, and/or to discuss leadership lessons that may have taken place.

Unauthorized or malicious damage to the property of the University or other persons or entities resulting from organizational activities is prohibited and the sponsoring RSO shall be responsible for any and all damage.

Any equipment or supplies borrowed by the organization should be returned to the office from which the equipment or supplies were borrowed in good, clean, and working order. Any damaged equipment will be repaired or replaced by the sponsoring organization. As with all aspects of event planning and fundraising, goal setting and appropriate preparation are the keys to success. The Office of Student Life supports and encourages proper event planning and preparation.

## **RSO Advisors**

The role of the faculty/staff advisor is to promote student development, retention, promotion, and graduation occurring beyond the traditional academic classroom environment. This additional commitment of time and energy extends a great opportunity for personal growth for the advisor and the students.

It is the policy of the Middle Georgia State University Office of Student Life that all recognized student organizations have at least one faculty/staff advisor. The minimum criteria to be an advisor to an RSO are:

- The advisor must have the approval of his/her Dean, Department Chair, or direct supervisor via the [Advisor Intent Form](#), which is then submitted to the Office of Student Life.
- Participation in a mandatory training session sponsored by the Office of Student Life and compliance with the policies and procedures reviewed in the session as well as outlined in this Handbook.

RSOs may have a community advisor, with the approval of the Office of Student Life. A community advisor is a person, outside of the University community, with an affiliation to an organization related to the functioning of the student organization. Community advisors will be expected to follow the same policies and procedures but have no financial or approval authority over the student organization. A community advisor's participation does not supersede the responsibilities and expectations of the faculty/staff advisor.

Some organizations may meet frequently, which can be inconvenient to a single advisor. Therefore, it is recommended that more active organizations have more than one advisor, if possible. This will assure the group more attention from its advisors and permit the benefits of advisorship to accrue to other faculty and staff members. Co-advisors should maintain open communication with each other regarding the activities and status of the student organization.

As faculty/staff members serving as advisors to RSOs are assuming additional responsibilities outside of their original position descriptions, it is important that they know and understand the policies and procedures related to RSOs and maintain open communication with the Director of Student Engagement and the Office of Student Life on issues related to the student organization.

### **Responsibilities and Expectations of an RSO Advisor**

The Office of Student Life views the position of student organization advisor as integral to the organization's continued success. This is an exceptional opportunity to work with students in an environment outside the typical classroom and should be viewed in a serious manner. The Office of Student Life commits to making every effort to supporting, encouraging, and working with advisors as opportunities arise.

1. The advisor should ensure that all proposed organizational activities and communications are in conformance with the goals and mission of the organization, the Office of Student Life and Middle Georgia State University.
2. The advisor should be aware of the organization's meetings and activities. He/She need not attend all organizational meetings, although attendance is encouraged. ***Advisor attendance at after-hours events sponsored by the organization and utilizing the facilities of Middle Georgia State University is a requirement of the organization being able to host the event.***
3. The advisor should meet with the officers/student leaders of the organization on a regular basis (at least once a month). Meetings of this type are an ideal arena to establish a meaningful working relationship with the students and to exercise effective advising/mentoring.
4. The advisor should request minutes and an agenda for all organizational meetings.
5. The advisor should have complete officer contact information, to include addresses, phone numbers, and student email addresses. Likewise, the advisor should have an up- to-date list of all currently active members of the student organization and be able to provide this list to the Office of Student Life upon request.
6. The advisor should receive and review monthly financial reports from the organization's treasurer. The advisor must also approve by signature or other agreement with the Office of Student Life, all COA allocations for the organization. The advisor should understand that under no circumstances will student activities funds be used to purchase or reimburse anyone for alcoholic beverages.
7. In the event that an RSO invites a guest/vendor to campus who is to be paid for services rendered, the advisor is responsible for securing appropriate documentation from the guest in advance of the proposed date of the service/event. All documentation should be submitted to the Office of Student Life for completion of agreement/contract and request of payment of guest, at least two weeks prior to the proposed event. Requests for payment of a guest or vendor that fail to follow this requirement run the risk of not being considered.

Documentation may include (but may not be limited to):

- a. A contract signed by the guest or vendor. [RSO Performance Contract](#) (*No advisor should ever sign the contract.*)
- b. A completed [Supplier Authorization Form](#)
8. The advisor should also review and approve all deposits of dues or fundraising monies into the organization's agency account.
9. The advisor should encourage the officers/leaders of the organization to distribute written reports (such as financial reports or minutes of meetings) to the general membership on a regular basis.
10. The advisor should be knowledgeable of the organization's purpose, constitution, by-laws, and mission statement and assist the membership of the organization in adherence to them.
11. Advisors for student organizations with agency accounts will be asked to sign an "Agency Fund Agreement" form each fall semester. This form re-states the advisor's agreement to serve in an advisory role for the student organization as well as states they understand the need to comply with the business practices of the University in matters related to monies collected or distributed by the student organization. This form serves as a "signature card" for the Middle Georgia State University Bursar's Office on all financial requests from the organization's agency account. The Office of Student Life will be responsible for collecting and forwarding these forms to the Bursar's Office.
12. While it is expected that an advisor will develop relationships with students, the University considers it inappropriate for faculty members and others in position to evaluate students to have amorous or sexual relations with those students currently enrolled in their classes or supervised by them. Furthermore, it is the responsibility of all advisors to avoid such relationships that result in conflicts of interest with students over whom they are in a position of authority by virtue of their teaching, research, committee assignments, administrative assignments, and advising.

### **Purpose of an RSO Advisor**

In addition to the meaningful educational relationships that can develop between advisors and student organizations, there are other benefits to be derived from serving as an advisor:

1. Advisors can offer organizations their professional experience to assist in the growth and development of leadership within the organization.
2. Advisors provide a degree of continuity to student organizations whose compositions may necessarily change from year to year as new students enter and others graduate.
3. An advisor's knowledge of University operations, policies, and procedures should enable them to assist organizations in facilitating organizational programs and the achievement of organizational goals.
4. As an employee of the University, the advisor is in a position to safeguard the University as well as the organization by working with groups, particularly the Office of Student Life, to assure that organizational programs and activities are educational in nature, that they contribute to the total educational mission of the University, and the organization is worthy of continuing recognition and association.
5. Advisors can and should guide the organization in its activities and its relationship with the University and with the Office of Student Life. Advisors should be a "compass" for the student organization, not the "rudder".
6. Likewise, advisors should not set policy for the organization, but should take an active role in its formation through active interaction with group members.

## Recognition of Student Organizations

### Policy

The Office of Student Life will be responsible for assisting students interested in forming a new student organization or reviving a previously recognized student organization. Proposed student organizations should not duplicate or compete with existing student organizations with similar missions by campus. For example, it would be perfectly acceptable to have Phi Beta Lambda (PBL) on the Macon & Cochran campuses. It would not be acceptable to have two PBL groups on one campus. Recognition of student organizations will only be considered during two time periods:

- Fall Semester – from the first day of fall semester classes to the last University business day in September.
- Spring Semester – from the first day of spring semester classes to the last business day in February.

Special consideration for recognition of student organizations beyond these two time periods may be made at the recommendation of the Director of Student Engagement, and/or his/her designee.

### Procedure

1. Students interested in forming a new student organization are encouraged to talk with a member of the Office of Student Life (Director of Student Engagement or Student Life Representative) to determine if a similar organization is already active, if a similar organization has been previously recognized and is currently inactive, or if the proposed organization fits the mission statement and goals of the Office of Student Life and of Middle Georgia State University.
2. Being that all student organizations should be student driven, the student(s) making contact with the Office of Student Life will be acknowledged as the student representative(s) of the proposed organization during the recognition process. Faculty members proposing a new student organization should identify student(s) to serve as the student representative(s) during the recognition process. The student representative(s) will be expected to abide by the policies and procedures set forth by the Office of Student Life, Middle Georgia State University and the University System of Georgia.

All sports clubs fall under the authority of the Middle Georgia State University Recreation and Wellness Program. However, all sports clubs will be expected to follow the same guidelines, policies and procedures as all other recognized student organizations.

3. Should the student(s) decide to pursue official recognition of a new student organization or the reactivation of a previously recognized student organization, the student representative(s) and the faculty advisor will need to complete organization registration via [MGA Knight Life](#).
4. All documents will be reviewed by the Director of Student Engagement, or his/her

designee, who may make corrections/suggestions and then will approve or deny recognition.

5. Provisional status will be given to all newly formed or re-activated student organizations for a period of one semester. During the provisional period, student officers/leaders and advisors must complete the mandatory RSO training session and must comply with the policies and procedures required of all recognized student organizations. If during this period there is no communication between the new organization (to include the advisor) and the Office of Student Life, an inactive status will be issued. Provisional RSOs will have the same privileges as officially recognized student organizations with limitations on applying for student activities monies.
6. After successfully completing one semester of provisional status, the student organization will be officially recognized.
7. If the proposed student organization does not receive recognition by either the Student Government Association or the Office of Student Life, the organization may appeal the decision to the Assistant Vice President of Student Affairs. The person hearing the appeal shall review all documentation and affirm, reverse, or modify the decision. The appeal shall be in such form as the Assistant Vice President of Student Affairs may require.
8. Exceptions to the recognition time periods can be made at the recommendation of Vice President of Student Affairs.

## **Policies and Procedures Related to RSOs**

***Failure to follow all policies/ procedures herein could result in an event, trip/travel, or fundraiser being considered not sanctioned by the University, and therefore, open the advisor(s) and/or the student leader(s) to individual liability.***

### **Catering/Food Service Policy**

See [Catering Grants](#) & [Catering Grant Request Form](#) for guidelines regarding RSO catering.

### **Policy**

All requests for catering or food service will be directed to the University's food service. The University's food services has the first right of refusal for all on-campus catering or food service requests.

### **Procedure**

Requests for food or catering at any on-campus event or activity sponsored by a recognized student organization should be coordinated through the Director of Student Engagement to assure compliance with policy and proper payment of services.

Recognized student organizations are not allowed to include home-made food items as a part of any event. The only exception is for the University's International Festival.

### **Appropriate Technology Use Policy**

Students involved in or operating as a representative of any recognized student organization will be expected to know and abide by the Middle Georgia State University Appropriate Use Policy, which can be found in its entirety at [Appropriate Technology Use Policy](#).

### **Consensual Relationships Policy**

Recognizing that Middle Georgia State University faculty members are professionals whose conduct must not jeopardize the trust and confidence of the students they serve or the general public which supports the institution, the University considers it inappropriate for faculty members and others in positions to evaluate students to have amorous or sexual relations with those students currently enrolled in their classes or supervised by them.

The Consensual Relationships Policy can be found here: [Consensual Relationships](#).

### **Copyright Law**

An organization must complete and submit the [Fair Use Checklist](#) before they can be approved to host a movie night. All four factors in the checklist must be met before an organization will receive approval.

### **Drug-Free Campus Policy**

Middle Georgia State University recognizes and supports local, state, and federal laws and policies of the Board of Regents, with respect to the sale, use, distribution, and possession of alcoholic beverages and illegal drugs, as well as the Drug-Free Postsecondary Education Act of 1990 with respect to the manufacture, distribution, sale, possession, or use of marijuana, controlled substances,

or dangerous drugs on University campuses and elsewhere. [Alcohol and Drug-Free Campus Policy](#).

### **Eligibility for Participation in Student Life Activities Policy**

Middle Georgia State University takes great pride in having students participate in collegiate activities of both non-competitive and competitive nature. For this reason, any student seeking to participate in such activities (recognized student organizations, recreational/intramural tournaments, outdoor recreation trips, etc.) must comply with eligibility guidelines. [Eligibility for Participation in Activities](#)

### **Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act affords students certain rights with respect to their educational records. Information about FERPA can be found in its entirety at [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act \(FERPA\)](#).

### **Hazing**

#### ***1. Anti-Hazing Policy***

Middle Georgia State University has a ZERO-TOLERANCE policy for hazing. Hazing is defined as such:

“Hazing is any action or situation, with or without the consent of the participants, which recklessly, intentionally, or unintentionally endangers the mental, physical, or academic health or safety of a student.” – University of Michigan, Dean of Students Office

Information hazing can be found in its entirety at [Anti-Hazing Policy](#).

#### ***2. Max Gruver Act – Hazing Reporting***

In compliance with the Georgia SB 85 "Max Gruver Act", beginning July 1, 2021, Middle Georgia State University will publicly disclose administrative adjudications of hazing or hazing related convictions.

Records will include the name of any school organization involved, date(s) of occurrence, as well as a description of specific hazing related findings, sanctions, adjudications and convictions for any person or school organization.

In compliance with Max Gruver Act, we will provide the following information that will be maintained for at least five years following final adjudication or conviction.

### **Nondiscrimination Policy**

Middle Georgia State University is committed to ensuring a safe learning environment that supports the dignity of all members of the University community. Pursuant to [Section 6.6](#) of the Policy Manual of the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia (BOR), federal and state laws and regulations, and our vision, mission, and values, Middle Georgia State University prohibits unlawful discrimination, harassment, and retaliation based on any characteristic protected by law. Factors of race, national origin, color, sex, gender, age, religion, sexual orientation, or disability are not considered in the admission or treatment of students or in employment. To that end, University policy prohibits specific forms of behavior that violate federal and state laws and regulations, including but not limited to Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and subsequent executive orders, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as

well as Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. [Nondiscrimination and Anti-Harassment](#).

## **Party Policy**

### **Policy**

In order to continue to provide positive experiences for students involved in extra- and co-curricular activities, the Middle Georgia State University Office of Student Life has officially implemented the following procedure related to events sponsored by recognized student organizations. Please be assured that this policy is not designed to decrease social activity of Middle Georgia State University students but rather, to better manage the activity and to ensure the safety and security of all participants attending events at the University.

### **Procedure**

Recognized student organizations wishing to sponsor parties on campus must abide by the following guidelines:

- A “party” will be defined as a social event that occurs on campus beyond regular business hours or which invitations are issued to individuals beyond the regular student membership of the organization.
- The advisor(s) of the recognized student organization must agree that the proposed activity meets the mission of the organization and of the University.
- The advisor(s) will agree to be present for the duration of the event.
- The population targeted to attend the event should include only current Middle Georgia State University students, faculty, and staff and their guests.
- All participants must show valid student I.D. cards in order to be admitted to the event, in addition to any price of admission.
- Students are allowed one (1) guest and must accept responsibility for the behavior of their guest.
- Individuals not sponsored by a student should not be admitted to the event.
- All participants must sign-in and acknowledge sponsorship of their guest(s). The advisor should retain the Sign-In Sheet, forwarding a copy of said sheet to the Director of Student Engagement.
- The Office of Student Life will work with the Office of Public Safety to secure the services of additional security officers, as needed for the duration of the event.

## **Posting and Publicity Policy**

### **Policy**

The Office of Student Life will assist all recognized student organizations in the posting and promoting of events and activities, provided notification is given in a timely and accurate manner, generally two weeks prior to the date of the event.

### **Procedure**

All publicity and promotional material for on- and off-campus events and activities, including but not limited to posters, notices, and banners, must be pre-approved by the staff of the Office of Student Life on the respective campuses:

- Macon: Game Room
- Cochran: For kiosk posting, the key may be checked out from the Student Life Representative, located in Welch Hall.

- Eastman: The Student Life Representative and Residence Life Coordinator have the keys to kiosks.
- Dublin: Receptionist Desk in the Main Lobby
- Warner Robins: Campus Services Front Desk in Administration Building

Stamped items may be posted by individual student organizations on Student Life bulletin boards.

All publicity and promotional material must carry the name of the sponsoring organization or individual responsible for the event or activity, as well as the date(s), time(s), location(s) and contact information, either phone number or email address. Signs and flyers should not contain lewd or offensive words, symbols, and pictures.

Any material posted in unapproved locations (walls, painted surfaces or entrance/exit doors), not bearing the Student Life Approved Stamp, or otherwise not in compliance with these regulations will be removed.

A minimum of two weeks, or ten University business days, notice for all postings is required for all requests.

### **Press Release Policy**

#### **Policy**

The Office of Student Life will assist all recognized student organizations in the posting and promoting of events and activities, provided notification is given in a timely and accurate manner, generally a minimum of ten University business days, recognizing that some news/press agencies may require more notice.

#### **Procedure**

Recognized student organizations wishing to promote or advertise an event or activity that is open to the public must submit a request to the Office of Student Life at least two weeks prior to the event. The request should include the name of the sponsoring organization, date, time, location, and appropriate contact information. Photographs and biographical information on speakers should be provided as well. The Office of Student Life will forward the information to the appropriate office, and request that they share the information with appropriate media sources outside of the University.

Recognized student organizations are encouraged to work internally with Student Life and Student Media to promote on-campus, via:

- KnighTV
- The Statement, the University's student newspaper
- Calendar announcements
- Weekly email announcements

These requests should be directed to the Director of Student Engagement.

***Under no circumstances should members of any RSO submit information directly to external media outlets without the consent and knowledge of the Office of Student Life.***

### **Regents' Statement on Disruptive Behavior**

Any student, faculty member, administrator, or employee, acting individually or in concert with others, who clearly obstructs or disrupts, or attempts to obstruct or disrupt any teaching, research, administrative, disciplinary, or public service activity, or any other activity authorized to be discharged or held at any USG institution is considered by the Board to have committed an act of gross irresponsibility and shall be subject to disciplinary procedures, possibly resulting in dismissal or termination of employment (BoR Minutes, 1968-69, pp. 166-168; 1970-71, p. 98). [Board of Regents Policy Manual](#).

### **Reserving Space/Facilities and Event Registration Policy**

#### **Policy**

Recognized student organizations and student organizations in the formation or provisional stages of recognition may request University facilities for meetings and activities. Space is available on a first-come, first-serve basis, with academic programs and activities taking precedent over all other requests.

#### **Procedure**

1. As with all aspects of event planning and fundraising, goal setting and appropriate planning and preparation are the keys to success for any event or activity.
2. Officers/Student leaders and/or advisors of recognized student organizations may request the use of University facilities via [MGA Knight Life](#)'s administrative dashboard.
3. It is strongly recommended that all requests be made at least ten University business days or two business weeks in advance of the proposed event.
4. The Office of Student Life will receive the request, confirm availability, and forward the confirmed request to appropriate offices/departments on campus, including but not limited to Public Safety, Plant Operations, Continuing Education, and Academic Affairs.
5. Use of facilities, equipment and other University property shall be subject to availability and reasonable scheduling by the Office of Student Life to promote fair sharing of their use. Unusual requests for equipment, to include piano usage, will be at the discretion of the Director of Student Engagement or his/her designee. Any costs, up to and including repair, associated with such requests shall be the financial responsibility of the requesting student organization.
6. The Office of Student Life will also forward a confirmation to the officer/student leader(s) and the appropriate advisor(s).
7. The Office of Student Life may request a meeting with the officer/student leader(s) and advisor(s) before the propose event to discuss:
  - a. Safety and security concerns
  - b. Issues of liability
  - c. Risk management
  - d. Planning and Implementation
  - e. Issues of responsibility
8. Likewise, the Office of Student Life may request a meeting after the event to discuss

- a. How successful was the event?
- b. How might the event or the planning/implementation process be improved?
- c. Are there any issues or problems that may have developed that need to be resolved?
- d. What did the student responsible for the event learn and what can they apply in the future?
- e. Unauthorized use or malicious damage to the property of the University or other persons or entities resulting from organizational activities is prohibited and the recognized student organization shall be responsible for any damages.
- f. Any equipment or supplies borrowed by the organization shall be returned to the office from which it was borrowed in good, clean, working order. Any damaged equipment will be repaired or replaced by the organization as required.

## **RSO Annual Registration Policy**

### **Policy**

In order for any student group to operate as an officially recognized student organization (RSO) at Middle Georgia State University, the group must successfully complete the annual recognition process. In order for a recognized student organization to maintain active status, they must provide the Office of Student Life with documentation to signify their intent to be active.

### **Procedure**

All recognized student organizations planning to be active during the academic year should present the following forms/documentation to the Office of Student Life by the last business day in September for fall semester and by the last business day in February for spring semester. All forms should be submitted via [MGA Knight Life](#).

## **RSO Financial Responsibility Policy and Procedure**

*Failure to follow all policies/ procedures herein could result in an event, trip/travel, or fundraiser being considered not sanctioned by the University, and therefore, open the advisor(s) and/or the student leader(s) to individual liability.*

### **Policy**

All recognized student organizations at Middle Georgia State University will be expected to follow standard operating procedures in regards to their financial responsibility and practice. All financial transactions will conform to the purposes and practices approved by the University System of Georgia, the Board of Regents, the Middle Georgia State University Bursar's Office, and the Office of Student Affairs.

### **Procedure**

#### **1. Agency Accounts**

- a. Every recognized student organization has the opportunity to establish, upon request, an agency account with the University. This agency account will be used to deposit any and all funds collected from membership dues, fundraisers, donations, etc. Student organizations are **NOT** permitted to establish outside bank accounts for management of any funds.
- b. Student organizations wishing to establish an agency account should follow procedures

outlined in [Agency Account Information](#).

- c. No financial transaction will be processed without the proper documentation bearing the signature of the faculty advisor.
- d. **Under no circumstance should a faculty advisor or a student officer/leader sign any contract for services. All contracts should be forwarded to the Director of Student Engagement who will request the signature of the Vice President for Finance, Business, and Operations.**
- e. It is the responsibility of the officers and advisor(s) of the RSO to monitor this account on a regular basis. RSOs should refrain from using the Agency Account Balance Inquiry more than once each semester.
- f. No “slush funds” or “petty cash funds” should be kept by any member or advisor of the RSO. All dues and fundraising monies should be deposited with the Middle Georgia State University Bursar’s Office by the next business day.
- g. The use of RSO Agency Account monies must conform to the purposes and practices approved by the Board of Regents, the Middle Georgia State University Bursar’s Office, and the Office of Student Affairs.

## 2. Fundraising

- a. Fundraising by RSOs is encouraged in order to offset the cost of travel, fees, supplies, events, etc. and should not exceed 20% of the organization’s COA allocation unless prior approval has been granted by the Office of Student Life and/or SGA.
- b. To request approval for fundraising by an RSO:
  - a) The advisor must apply to the Office of Student Life at least ten University business days or two weeks in advance of the proposed activity by submitting Facilities Request and Event Registration via [MGA Knight Life](#) with all pertinent information related to the proposal to include but not limited to: dates, location, associated costs or fees, potential risks or liabilities, length of fundraiser, etc.
- c. Appropriate fundraising ideas include, but are not limited to:
  - a) Sale of pre-packaged foods or coupons for same, when the selling does not directly competes or interferes with existing University-operated services or contracts (i.e. Cafeteria, Coffee Shop, and Bookstore) or that competes with previously approved fundraisers by other RSOs.
  - b) Sale of t-shirts
  - c) Tournaments or competitions
  - d) Yard Sales
  - e) Prizes/awards from raffles-Participation in the raffle must be available to all students. Raffles/lotteries may be lawfully conducted without a license if participants are allowed to enter at no cost. For these events, individual prizes must be de minimis in value (not to exceed \$100). If licenses are obtained and raffle tickets are sold, gifts are limited to funds collected in the raffle.
- d. Inappropriate fundraising ideas include, but are not limited to:
  - a) Bake Sales, to include the selling or giving away of homemade food items
  - b) Selling of a ticket for a chance to win a prize (raffles) without a raffle license.
  - c) Any event that directly competes or interferes with existing University- operated services or contracts (i.e. Cafeteria, Coffee Shop, and Bookstore) or that competes with previously approved fundraisers by other RSOs, as determined by the Director of Student Engagement.
  - d) Selling of any item or collection of funds for said item by anyone other than an authorized member of the RSO.

- e. Non-compliance with this policy may result in the loss of recognized status.
- f. Under no circumstance should any member of an RSO solicit sponsorships and/or donations from outside agencies or businesses without prior approval from the Director of Student Engagement. It is the responsibility of the RSO advisor to secure approval.

### 3. COA Funds (See [COA Allocation and Usage](#))

- a. COA allocations are intended to supplement and complement the fundraising efforts of RSOs. It is not now, nor has it ever been, intended to supplant organizational responsibility for fundraising, nor be the sole source of funding for the organization's activities.
- b. COA funds are considered separate from the organization's agency account and are managed by the Office of Student Affairs.
- c. When making COA requests, all RSOs should consider whether or not the proposed event or activity is for the benefit of the larger student body, as COA funds come from a portion of the student activities fees.
- d. As "slush funds" are prohibited, if petty cash is needed for making change for an approved event, RSOs can request a maximum of fifty dollars (\$50) in petty cash from the Bursar's Office using the form to be supplied by the Bursar's office. A cash box may be requested from the Office of Student Life, provided this request is a part of the original request for approval, at least ten University business days in advance of the event.

### 4. Reimbursements

- a. In order to expedite the reimbursement process, do not mix personal and professional purchases on the same transaction. **Sales tax cannot be reimbursed.**
- b. Reimbursement processing procedures are included in the [SACT Fee Policies and Procedures](#).

## **RSO Officer/Student Leader Policy**

### **Policy**

Any student who holds an elected or appointed position of leadership must maintain a minimum 2.0 cumulative grade point average (GPA) and must not have a previous or current disciplinary record. Recognized student organizations may increase the minimum GPA requirement. Additionally, a student who holds an elected or appointed position of leadership must also be enrolled at Middle Georgia State University during the length of service and participation.

### **Procedure**

Using the RSO Officer and Advisor Roster, the Office of Student Life may confirm eligibility for each officer/student leader for each RSO.

### **Soliciting and Selling Policy**

Soliciting and selling for personal profit are not permitted on any Middle Georgia State University campus. Recognized student organizations proposing fundraising projects must follow the fundraising guidelines previously mentioned in this handbook. Likewise, recognized student organizations will be expected to comply with the RSO Financial Responsibility Policy previously

mentioned.

## **Special Procedures for Adjudicating Cases involving RSOs**

### **Policy**

It is expected that all recognized student organizations (RSOs) will abide by the policies and procedures of the Office of Student Affairs, Middle Georgia State University, and the University System of Georgia. Failure to do so may result in adjudication and the imposing of sanctions on the RSO.

### **Procedure**

Should a complaint be filed against a recognized student organization (RSO), the Assistant Vice President of Student Affairs (AVPSA) or his/her designee will conduct an investigation and may impose the following sanctions if necessary:

1. Cancellation of recognized status
2. Imposition of monetary fines, withholding or withdrawal of allocated COA funds and/or Agency Account Funds
3. Imposition of restitution of damages
4. Removal of any of the RSO's officers or members from the RSO or its activities
5. Restriction of any of the privileges or rights enjoyed by the RSO

An RSO may appeal any sanction imposed by the AVPSA or his/her designee provided relevant grounds for appeal are cited.

(See the [Student Code of Conduct](#)).

Written notification of the decision to appeal and the grounds for appeal must be received by the AVPSA within 48 hours after the original decision is communicated to the RSO. Appeal proceedings will begin within five (5) University Bursar's days of the receipt of the written notification from the RSO. Appeal will be heard by the Vice President of Student Affairs.

The decision of the Vice President of Student Affairs constitutes the final court of appeal in all cases not involving suspension or expulsion of individuals from the institution.

### **Student Email Policy**

Middle Georgia State University students are provided an e-mail account free of charge. The University considers this account an official means of communication. The Student Email Policy can be found at [Student E-mail](#).

### **Student Organization Responsibility for Drug Abuse Policy**

Official Code of Georgia Annotated Section 20-3-90 et seq., provides that any student organization functioning at any university system institution which knowingly permits or authorizes the sale, distribution, serving, possession, consumption, or use of marijuana, a controlled substance, or a dangerous drug when such sale, distribution, serving, possession, consumption, or use is not in compliance with the laws of this state shall have its recognition as a student organization withdrawn and shall be expelled from campus for a minimum of a calendar year from the year of determination of guilt. The organization shall also be prohibited from the use of all property and facilities of the university system institution with which it is affiliated. These disciplinary actions are subject to

administrative review and hearing procedures as are provided in the code.

***Failure to follow all policies/ procedures herein could result in an event, trip/travel, or fundraiser being considered not sanctioned by the University, and therefore, open the advisor(s) and/or the student leader(s) to individual liability.***

## **Student Travel Policy**

### **Policy**

Students participating in extra- and co-curricular travel should complete all necessary travel forms prior to departure. It is the responsibility of the advisor and/or sponsor of the travel opportunity to make sure all forms are completed and forwarded to their campus Student Life Representative at least five (5) University business days prior to departure. Travel forms are located at [Student Life Documents and Forms...](#)

### **Procedure**

See Student/Group Travel procedures in [SACT Fee Policies and Procedures](#).

### **Tobacco Free Campus Policy**

In alignment with USG policy 9.1.7 as of October 1, 2014, Middle Georgia State University prohibits the use of tobacco products on any property owned, leased, or controlled by the University. All faculty, staff, students, visitors, vendors, contractors, and all others are prohibited from using any tobacco products, i.e., cigarettes, cigars, smokeless tobacco, snuff, electronic cigarettes, hookahs, pipes or other similar products while on University property.

The implementation of this policy is a shared responsibility, which means all students, faculty, and staff share in the responsibility to help keep the campus tobacco-free. Violation of this policy may result in corrective action under the Student Code of Conduct or campus human resource policies. Persons refusing to comply may be asked to leave campus. [Tobacco Free Campus Policy](#)

## **Vehicle Request Policy**

### **Policy**

Advisors for recognized student organizations may request the use of designated University vehicles for the purpose of extra- and co-curricular student travel. Students are not allowed to drive designated University vehicles.

### **Procedure**

Advisors requesting the use of a designated University vehicle for extra- and co-curricular student travel should complete the online [Vehicle Reservation Request](#).

MGA employees who have received certification through the MGA Risk Management Office are allowed to drive University vehicles. For information on the certification process, contact the Office of Risk Management at (478) 934-3034.

The advisor will be expected to read and understand the “Employee Responsibilities” in relation to

driving a University vehicle, as found on the Vehicle Request Form. In case of an emergency, advisors must keep copies of all Student Travel Agreement and Registration Forms while traveling.

Advisors who use personal vehicles for state business must have a copy of the [GA Liability Insurance Identification Card](#) in their vehicle in case of an accident. This card contains information needed prior to calling in and reporting an accident as well as the number to call to report the accident.